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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/762,475	01/23/2004	Masamichi Takahashi	118463	4933
25944	7590	05/23/2005		
OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC P.O. BOX 19928 ALEXANDRIA, VA 22320			EXAMINER TSAL, CAROL S W	
			ART UNIT 2857	PAPER NUMBER

DATE MAILED: 05/23/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

10/762,475

Applicant(s)

TAKAHASHI ET AL.

Examiner

Carol S. Tsai

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 January 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 7, 8, 14, 15 and 21 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 2-6, 9-13, and 16-20 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 6/24/2004.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

## DETAILED ACTION

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102*

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1, 7, 8, 14, 15, and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U. S. Publication 2002/0107859 to Tsuyuki.

With respect to claims 1, 8, 15, Tsuyuki discloses an evaluation apparatus comprising: a propagation information storage unit configured to store propagation information data including information to be propagated within a plurality of groups to be evaluated (see paragraphs 00018, 0136, and 0216); and an evaluation unit configured to evaluate an influence that one group, which is selected from among the plurality of groups, has on other group by analyzing the propagation information data stored in the propagation information storage unit (see paragraphs 00018, 0093, 0132, 0133, 0153-0157, and 0362).

As to claims 7, 14, and 21, Tsuyuki also discloses the groups being organizations each having one or more components (see paragraphs 0018, 0126, and 0232).

*Allowable Subject Matter*

3. Claims 2-6, 9-13, and 16-20 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

*Conclusion*

4. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Ashford et al. disclose a method for use in an expert system which selectively allows the system to avoid asking the user a question by providing the answer to that question based on related information that may have been previously attained in the system.

Millett et al. disclose a computerized system and method for electronically storing, retrieving, separating, comparing and interrelating data which is maintained in a predetermined classification scheme.

Gotz et al. disclose techniques provided to manage the integrity of data stored in two or more data management systems by detecting inconsistencies between the data management systems.

Houston et al. disclose a method and computer system for generating and maintaining database instances.

Covington, Robert C. JR. et al. disclose a method and apparatus for providing customized responses to user's inquiry by providing a continuously updated database and experts designated to provide a response where the database's responses are insufficient.

Gehani et al. disclose a method and apparatus for maintaining consistency in

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databases among data processors of a computer network involves an improved epidemic protocol involving the generation of database version vectors for database replicas.

*Contact Information*

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Carol S. W. Tsai whose telephone number is (571) 272-2224. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Marc S. Hoff can be reached on (571) 272-2216. The fax number for TC 2800 is (703) 872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 886-217-9197 (toll-free).



Carol S. W. Tsai  
Patent Examiner  
Art Unit 2857

05/04/05